

Introduction to the Regions ~~~~~

The Plan development team reviewed major threats to wildlife and habitats and examined conservation needs on a regional level. The team divided the state into nine regions:

- Mojave Desert
- Colorado Desert
- South Coast
- Central Coast
- North Coast–Klamath
- Modoc Plateau
- Sierra Nevada and Cascades
- Central Valley and Bay-Delta
- Marine

These regional divisions were based on the state's physiographic characteristics (i.e., watersheds and vegetation communities) coupled with consideration of wildlife- and natural resources management areas of responsibility. The regional approach facilitated the discussion of habitats, ecosystems, and conservation issues at a scale appropriate for conservation planning and compatible with resource management jurisdictions and decision-making authorities.

For example, the Sierra Nevada and Cascades ranges are discussed under one region, the Sierra Nevada–Cascades, because these ranges are contiguous, and a large proportion of the land in these

regions is federally managed pursuant to similar management policies and documents, such as the Forest Service's Sierra Nevada Forest Plan. The Central Valley was grouped with the Bay-Delta region because the jurisdictional area of the California Bay-Delta Authority program (Authority) encompasses both regions. Water management issues form the crux of many habitat issues in both the Central Valley and Bay-Delta, and the Authority has a lead role in coordinating state and federal agencies' efforts to protect and restore ecosystems and improve water quality across the region.

A map of each region is included at the beginning of each regional chapter, and the regional chapters include the following standard sections:

Overview

This section provides a general description of the region's physical landscape, land ownership, terrestrial and aquatic resources, and species and habitats within the region. The overview may also give a brief account of some of the region's major conservation challenges and trends for species and habitats.

Species at Risk

The wildlife species at risk (also referred to as Fish and Game's **Special Animals List** or special status species) and **endemic** species are summarized by species group, and the Web reference is provided for the Wildlife Species Matrix, where information may be found regarding all special-status species, their distribution, and habitat associations. The matrix may be sorted by region and provides a link to detailed information for each species, where available.

While each species is not discussed in detail, this section does feature two or three special status species to illustrate how various activities and habitat changes have affected wildlife in the region. These individual species discussions also illustrate needs and opportunities for conservation and habitat restoration.

Stressors Affecting Wildlife and Habitats

This section describes the major stressors or threats that adversely affect wildlife, habitats, and ecosystems. Many of the activities and projects identified as stressors to wildlife provide important benefits in meeting the housing, transportation, recreation, and sustenance needs of California's residents. In identifying such activities among the regional stressors, it is not the intention of this report to suggest that these activities do not provide important societal functions and services. However, the purpose of this report is to clearly describe the effects of the stressors on wildlife and habitats.

Conservation Actions to Restore and Conserve Wildlife

This section describes important conservation actions for maintaining wildlife diversity. Included are suggested programs and initiatives, recommendations for improving or expanding current programs, and needs for support and funding. Also identified are the venues or lead agencies through which these conservation actions would likely be taken. The conservation actions are based on consultations with regional experts, results of conservation-action workshops, and review of major resource conservation and planning documents.